

ANNUAL REPORT

— TO THE —

Bedlingtonshire

URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL,

-: For the Year 1928, :-

— BY —

 W. HUDSON, 

Medical Officer of Health.

Printed by Order of the Urban District Council.

BEDLINGTON :—

E. H. METCALF, PRINTER, &c., FRONT STREET.

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TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS
OF THE
Bedlingtonshire Urban District Council.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

I have pleasure in submitting to you the ordinary report required by the Ministry, of the Health and Sanitary condition of your district for the year 1928.

The statistics furnished compare favourably with the Mortality Rate of England and Wales, and considering the Social Conditions of this Industrial Area the report for the year can be looked upon as satisfactory. The Infantile Mortality Rate shows a fall to the 1922 level, a circumstance which has some bearing on the Maternity and Child Welfare Service. The year has been associated with a slow but steady progress in Housing provision by the Local Authority, whilst the clearance of the East End Insanitary Area, known as the Bedlingtonshire (Walker Terrace) Improvement Scheme is *statu quo ante*.

The condition of overcrowding still necessitates increased Housing provision, but a greater effort is needed in the demolition of Insanitary Dwellings, many of which unfortunately exist amongst the older types of houses in the district. We look to the early assistance of the Ministry in dealing with this aspect of Housing. Schemes for the construction of a new Sewage Disposal to tidal waters and conjointly the conversion of the Privy Midden to the Water Carriage System have now approached a point when we can assuredly anticipate something in a concrete form in 1929.

The valuable work of the Maternity and Child Welfare Service is reflected in the Low Infantile and Maternal Mortality Rates for the year.

The inspection of Meat and Milk under the regulations has been assiduously conducted throughout the year by the Sanitary Inspector.

Area (acres)	9.025.784
Population	28,110
Number of Inhabited Houses, approx.	6,720
Number of Families, approx.	6,800
Rateable Value (April, 1928)	£111,286 13 9
Sum Represented (by 1d. Rate)	£463 13 1
Rateable Value (October, 1928)	£111,238 3 9
Sum Represented by 1d. Rate	£463 9 10

DEATH RATE.

During the year 271 deaths, 150 of males and 121 of females, were registered. This includes a newly-born male infant found on the south side of the Wansbeck river. There were 66 Inward Transfers and 4 Outward Transfers. This makes a total of 333 deaths, 192 of males and 141 of females allocated to the district, and is equivalent to an Annual Death Rate of 11·8 per 1,000.

SUMMARY OF DEATHS FOR THE YEAR 1928.

	Netherton		Bedl'ton		Sleekh'n		Cambois		W. Sleekh'n		Stakef'd		Chopp'gton		Total.	
	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G
January ...	2	0	8	4	3	4	3	4	1	1	2	4	2	2	21	19
February ...	0	1	3	3	3	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	4	1	13	11
March ...	1	0	6	3	6	4	0	1	2	2	2	1	5	3	22	14
April ...	0	0	4	4	4	2	0	0	0	0	3	0	3	1	14	7
May ...	1	0	0	4	3	5	1	1	1	1	0	1	7	0	13	12
June ...	1	0	2	2	1	2	0	2	0	1	1	3	1	0	6	10
July ...	1	2	3	2	4	4	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	2	12	10
August ...	1	1	5	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2	4	1	11	5
September ...	0	0	6	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	3	2	11	3
October ...	1	1	1	5	1	6	1	0	1	0	0	0	4	0	9	12
November ...	0	0	1	1	1	0	3	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	7	4
December ...	0	1	3	5	4	4	2	2	0	1	1	1	1	0	11	14
	8	6	42	33	30	35	13	11	8	8	11	15	38	13	150	121

BIRTH RATE.

During the year 610 births, 308 of boys and 302 of girls, have been notified, and of these 300 boys and 300 girls were registered within the district. This includes 21 illegitimate births, 11 of boys and 10 of girls, and is equivalent to an Annual Birth Rate of 21·3 per 1,000.

SUMMARY OF BIRTHS FOR THE YEAR 1928.

	Netherton		Bedl'ton		Sleekh'n		Cambois		W. Sleekh'n		Stakef'd		Chopp'gton		Total.	
	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G
January ...	1	0	10	8	6	2	3	2	2	0	3	3	4	10	29	25
February ...	0	1	4	8	6	4	3	3	1	2	0	1	12	5	26	24
March ...	1	0	5	11	8	7	4	2	4	0	2	1	5	5	29	26
April ...	1	1	8	9	6	4	2	3	1	1	4	0	8	1	30	19
May ...	4	2	9	8	8	5	3	5	1	0	1	1	6	6	32	27
June ...	0	4	4	9	2	6	1	0	2	0	2	0	11	6	22	25
July ...	2	2	6	12	4	10	1	3	1	3	1	2	4	8	19	40
August ...	2	2	6	2	3	4	4	2	0	1	1	4	6	7	22	22
September ...	0	0	4	8	8	1	3	7	1	2	1	1	3	6	20	25
October ...	3	1	13	11	6	3	2	0	0	2	1	0	6	3	31	20
November ...	0	2	10	7	5	2	4	4	0	2	1	2	4	3	24	22
December ...	0	1	6	10	2	3	2	3	1	0	1	3	4	5	16	25
	14	16	85	103	64	51	32	34	14	13	18	18	73	65	300	300

CONSIDERATION OF THE DEATH TABLE.

This is based on a population for mid-year 1928 of 28,110, as furnished by the Registrar General. It is inconceivable that there should be a decrease of 990, which means approximately one-thirtieth of the population since mid-year 1927. There does not appear to have been any changes to justify such a marked fall.

The death rate of 11·8 calculated on the above population is ·1 above the rate for England and Wales.

The death rate from Tuberculosis and Cancer or Malignant Disease presents no appreciable change to that of last year, whilst deaths from Heart Disease appear to increase year by year and are probably due to the long continued prevalence of Rheumatism in its different forms and at various ages. It will be interesting to note in the future the effect of the increase in Incidence of Tuberculosis on the death rate from this disease.

DEATH RATE PER 1,000 POPULATION OF CANCER & TUBERCULOSIS.

Deaths from	1920	1921	1922	1923	1924	1925	1926	1927	1928
Cancer ..	19	32	23	25	24	28	18	28	28
Tuberculosis ..	35	51	38	39	40	26	35	28	24
Death Rates per 1000 population.									
Cancer ..	·7	1·1	·8	·9	·85	·97	·61	·96	·99
Tuberculosis ..	1·3	1·9	1·3	1·4	1·4	·9	1·2	·96	·85

THE CAUSES OF DEATH AT THE VARIOUS PERIODS OF LIFE
UNDER ONE YEAR.

CAUSE OF DEATH.	Under 1 Week.	1--2 Weeks.	2--3 Weeks.	3--4 Weeks.	Total under 1 Month.	1--5 Months.	5--6 Months.	6--9 Months.	9--12 Months.	Total Deaths under One Year.
Bronchitis ...		2	2	1	5	3		1		9
Pneumonia ...						1	3	3		7
Tubercular Meningitis ...									1	1
Congenital Malformation	1				1	1		1		3
Convulsions ...		1			1			1		2
Prematurity ...	11		1	1	13		1			14
Marasmus ...							1			1
Debility from Birth ...	1				1		1			2
Diseases of Parturition...	2				2					2
Other Causes ...				1	1		1		1	3
TOTALS ...	15	3	3	3	24	5	7	6	2	44

This total excludes a dead male infant found at the south side of the Wansbeck at Stakeford.

INFANTILE MORTALITY.

The Infantile Mortality Rate of 73 is an acceptable reduction and due to the lessened number of deaths from Pneumonia and Bronchitis. The deaths from Prematurity do not show the same fall and may probably be accounted for by the underfed condition of the mother; these were at ages from 1 hour to 1 day in 10 cases, and in the remaining 4 cases—5 days, 16 days, 3 weeks and 4 months.

In such cases little can be expected from the Child Welfare Service in which the intervention of the Health Visitor is not expected, whilst deaths of this nature cannot be considered as preventable.

There is still a decrease in the number of deaths from Debility and Marasmus which might be termed preventable.

	Death Rate.	Birth Rate.	Infantile Mortality Rate.
1928	11·8	21 3	73 0
1927	11·7	20·6	101·6
1926	10·9	24·00	69·5
1925	11·00	24·00	87
1924	12·4	25·8	10·0
1923	11·27	25	86
1922	11·26	26 3	73
1921	11·79	28 9	95
1920	32·17	32 4	105

ALLOCATION OF ZYMOTIC DEATHS IN THE VARIOUS SUB-DISTRICTS.

	Netherton	Bedl'ton	W Sl'kb'n	Sl'kb'n	Stakef'd	Chopp'g'n	Cambois	Totals
Enteric Fever	...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Small Pox	...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Measles	...	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Scarlet Fever	...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Diphtheria and Croup	...	0	0	1	1	0	0	2
Diarrhoea (under 2 years)	...	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Totals	...	0	1	1	2	0	0	4

PREVALENCE OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES DURING THE YEAR 1928.

	Diphtheria.	Pneumonia.	Scarlet Fever.	Small Pox.	Ophthalmia Neonatorum.	T. B. Pulmonary.	T. B. Other Forms.	Erysipelas.	Puerperal Pyrexia.	Puerperal Fever.	S. Diarrhoea.	Enteric Fever.	Totals.
January ...	1	20	10	1	1	5	5	2	0	0	0	0	45
February ...	1	11	6	1	0	6	0	1	1	0	0	0	27
March ...	1	14	5	0	0	6	4	1	0	0	0	0	31
April ...	0	8	3	0	1	6	1	1	0	1	0	0	21
May ...	2	24	0	2	0	7	2	1	0	0	0	0	38
June ...	0	12	1	3	0	8	3	2	0	0	0	0	29
July ...	0	2	4	1	0	3	3	0	0	0	3	0	16
August ...	0	7	4	0	0	7	0	1	1	0	0	0	20
September ...	0	4	5	0	0	3	3	1	0	1	0	1	18
October ...	1	10	1	0	0	9	0	2	0	0	0	0	23
November ...	0	9	2	0	0	5	2	3	2	0	0	2	25
December ...	0	17	0	0	0	8	3	0	0	0	0	3	31
Totals	6	138	41	8	2	73	26	15	4	2	3	6	324

The total number of cases notified during the year is 324 as compared with 400 in 1927. The incidence of Small-pox, Scarlet Fever and Pneumonia show a fall, and with the exception of Tuberculosis there is little or no change to that of previous years. Furthermore, the increase is marked as shown by the table in which 99 cases were notified, 73 of Pulmonary Tuberculosis and 26 other forms of the disease. The causes operative in this respect are—

- (1) Insanitary Dwellings and Overcrowding.
- (2) Lowered resistance by Insufficient and Unsuitable Nourishment;

the former being a call for early and drastic legislation coupled with activity by the Local Authority, whilst the latter is a matter which does not concern Local Administration.

The cases occurred principally in children of school age, and in these overcrowding and contact during the hours of sleep would be most likely to prevail. It is again significant that male workers, and particularly those above the age of 30 years, are less frequently effected, which is most probably due to the tendency to spend more time in the open air and not in stuffy, improperly ventilated and overcrowded rooms.

No action was taken by the Local Authority under Section 62 of the P.H. Act, 1925, or P.H. (Prevention of Tuberculosis) Regulations, 1925.

INCIDENCE OF PULMONARY AND OTHER FORMS OF TUBERCULOSIS.

Year.	Population.	Pulmonary Cases.	Rate per 1000		Rate per 1000
			Population.	Other Forms.	Population.
1921	26880	22	·81	33	1·2
1922	27420	17	·62	23	·83
1923	27750	13	·47	42	1·5
1924	28230	46	1·6	31	1·09
1925	28630	45	1·5	29	1·01
1926	29040	54	1·8	21	·72
1927	29100	44	1·5	18	·62
1928	28110	73	2·59	26	·82

Cases treated in Sanatoria:—

Cases admitted 1927 and discharged 1928	26
.. .. and discharged 1928	17
.. .. 1928 and undergoing treatment	22

NEW CASES AND MORTALITY DURING 1927, IN ACCORDANCE WITH
QUARTERLY RETURNS.

Age.	NEW CASES.				DEATHS.			
	Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.		Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0—1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
1—5	3	0	3	5	0	0	0	2
5—10	3	4	5	0	0	0	1	0
10—15	5	6	2	4	0	2	0	0
15—20	8	9	0	0	0	1	0	0
20—25	4	5	0	1	1	1	0	0
25—35	3	7	1	4	1	3	0	0
35—45	3	6	0	0	1	1	0	0
45—55	1	1	0	0	2	2	0	0
55—65	2	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
65—over	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	34	39	12	14	5	11	2	2
	73		26		16		4	

Influenza.—There was no serious epidemic of this disease throughout the year and it appeared in an uncomplicated form in January, November and December.

Pneumonia was prevalent in every month, but principally in the Spring, Autumn and Winter Quarters.

Scarlet Fever was notified in all months with the exception of May and December. The cases were generally of a mild type.

Diphtheria.—6 cases occurred throughout the year. The Shick and Dick Tests have not been applied in cases of Scarlet Fever or Diphtheria.

Small-pox.—There has been a few cases of this disease notified, and in no instance did any secondary cases arise.

Encephalitis Lethargica.—There were no cases notified during the year.

Enteric Fever.—6 cases were reported from Sunnyside and all had a common origin, directly or indirectly.

Summer Diarrhoea.—Only 3 cases were notified in the months of July, August and September. Probably others occurred, but owing to the mildness of the attack they were not notified, whilst others came under the observation of the Health Visitors in their out-door visiting.

Ophthalmia Neonatorum.—2 cases were notified and attended by the Health Visitors with satisfactory recovery in both.

Measles.—This disease not being notified, the incidence cannot be accurately determined, but there was no evidence of any outbreak during the year.

Chicken-pox.—Cases were reported in the months of November and December. This not being notifiable no statistics can be submitted.

Whooping Cough.—Cases of a moderately severe type occurred in the areas of Choppington, Guide Post, Stakeford and West Sleekburn during the months of November and December.

Puerperal Fever and Pyrexia.—2 of the former and 4 of the latter were notified. 4 cases were removed to Hospital under the Regulations. There were no deaths.

HOSPITALS.

Stakeford Isolation Hospital.

Staith Quay Infectious Diseases Hospital.

The Hospital and Ambulance Service for this area is similar to that already mentioned in previous reports.

Tuberculosis Dispensary . . . Lintonville Terrace, Ashington.

V.D. Clinic . . . Royal Victoria Infirmary, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

The Nursing Arrangement shows no change to that of previous years.

In matters Educational three lectures were given by Dr. Holroyd, representative of the T.B. Society. These were held at Bedlington Station, Guide Post and Stakeford.

The Wooley Sanatorium Magazine is circulated monthly by the Local Authority.

MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE.

There has been very little change in the service during the year. Sanction was granted by the Ministry for the treatment of infants under the service at the Babies' Hospital, West Parade, Newcastle-on-Tyne. A sum of £18 per annum was allotted for this purpose. It would be well to mention that payment for such cases in Hospital can only be made by the L.A. when Institutional Treatment has been sanctioned by the Medical Officer of Health.

A scheme has been commenced to raise the sum of £250 for the initial expenditure in the equipment of a Sun Ray Clinic, and at the time of this report £150 has been collected by various voluntary efforts. Although this is highly desirable in the treatment of certain diseases in children under five years, and of these particular mention might be made of Rickets, which, owing to social conditions is more prevalent of recent years, it may be desirable that when such a building is erected that it may meet the requirements of the Ante Natal, one and probably two of the Maternity and Child Welfare Centres, the School Medical Service, and an Orthopædic Clinic. Assistance will be forthcoming if the requirements meet with the approval of the Ministry, and it is thus hoped that the present year will see some definite advance in this direction.

Since the publication of this report the Ministry of Health have approved of the whole amount submitted in the estimate for Dried Milk Foods, and have now granted an additional amount of £57 for the year 1929-30.

ANTE NATAL WORK.

This Clinic continues to gain favour and it is expected that our present satisfactory system will be maintained, in which we have the excellent services of Dr. Harvey Evers. We quite realize that the time the specialist can afford in this service is being rapidly absorbed and that a feeling is prevalent that a Rota of Doctors with a training in the work would meet the requirements, but as a general practitioner and Medical Officer I am strongly opposed to the procedure. In the interest of the patient and doctor the officer in such a service should be a specially skilled and independent person devoting the whole of his time to Midwifery and Gynæcology, and should also carry out the duties of Investigating Officer in cases of Maternal Mortality.

There has been no change in the Maternity Services in the district, and the arrangement for treating Complicated and Necessitous Cases in the Princess Mary Maternity Hospital, Newcastle-on-Tyne, still operates.

PUERPERAL FEVER AND PUERPERAL PYREXIA.

Two cases of Puerperal Fever and four of Puerperal Pyrexia were notified during the year. Two of the former and two of the latter were treated in Hospital. There were no deaths.

There was one Maternal Death due to Parturition complicated by Influenza, which gives a Maternal Mortality Rate of 1.7 per 1,000 Births.

REPORT OF ANTE NATAL CLINIC, 1928.

Thirty-eight expectant mothers attended the Ante Natal Clinic during the year. This appears a somewhat small figure, but, as previously pointed out, the clinic is used almost exclusively in a consultative capacity, the routine ante natal supervision being carried out by the general practitioner.

There were seven cases of abnormal position of the fœtus, all of which were successfully corrected.

Six cases of deformed pelvis were diagnosed and treated with happy results to mothers and babies.

There were two cases of severe albumenuria.

Twelve cases were admitted to hospital.

I consider the year's work most satisfactory.

H. HARVEY EVERS, M.B., M.S., F.R.C.S.

THE EFFECT OF SOCIAL CONDITIONS ON THE HEALTH OF THE DISTRICT.

Mention has already been made of the menace of Overcrowding and Insanitary Housing, and in particular as a factor in the increasing incidence of Tuberculosis.

The question of insufficient nourishment and the effects therefrom, which is the natural consequence of the Low Wages and Unemployment in this Coal Mining Area, is another matter for consideration. Although there is no doubt that we cannot paint the glaring picture of distress which has unquestionably existed in other parts, yet the result of such a circumstance is reflected in the lowered resistance to disease, e.g., Tuberculosis as aforesaid, but more generally the recent outbreak of Influenza. Here, although the epidemic did not reach a type of high virulence, yet the sickness rate amongst all classes was distinctly higher than in previous outbreaks. Perhaps the effects were more evident to the general observer in the under-nourished, poorly shod and clothed condition of children of school age, and this was more pronounced in children of those persons maintained by Poor Law Relief or the Dole. The effect of a limited supply of Fresh Milk was clearly evident in these cases. Then the Mine worker had to be content with his one hot meal in the early part of the week and miss his mid-week meal of a similar nature. It is unnecessary for one to dwell on the effect of restricted Protein Diet on persons doing hard manual work.

Better provision and naturally of easier application was made for infants and children under five years of age through the Maternity and Child Welfare Scheme. This is more applicable to infants in early life whose entire diet consisted of Breast Milk, Artificial Feeding by Dried Milk and supplementary to Breast Feeding. In these cases the Maternity and Child Welfare Service, by augmenting their supply of Dried Milk to Nursing Mothers or Infants, has been able to give that necessary dietetic assistance to infants which has not been afforded to children of older years. The cases in which Dried Milk was given free of charge were carefully considered by the M. & C. W. Committee according to the Scale of Income, and it was only after further investigation by the Ministry that the claim made by the Local Authority in the supply of Dried Milk to necessitous cases was paid in full to the Authority.

We cannot leave the question of Insufficient Nourishment without recognizing the valuable assistance recently afforded by the Lord Mayor's Distress Fund. The amount allocated has been given to Expectant Mothers and Infants. It is gratifying to learn that recent sums of money from this Fund are required to be used entirely for Nursing and Expectant Mothers. This will materially assist the Local Authority in giving to all necessitous cases under five years a full supply of Dried Milk without having to seek additional assistance from the Ministry.

HOUSING.

During the period under review the Council have completed the erection of 50 houses at Cambois, and preparations are well forward for a commencement with 50 houses at Netherton, and when these are completed this will bring the total number of council houses to 504 as originally intended.

The houses for the Netherton area are to be built on a site at the West End of the town, this having been found to be the most suitable, and the houses are to be reserved for people from the Netherton area, or those working at Netherton and living away from the area.

During the past year the Council, like most other Local Authorities, have experienced great difficulty in collecting the rent and rates due from their Schemes.

It was unfortunate that the commencement of the new system of collecting an inclusive rent, instead of as previously, the rent and rates separately, coincided with the big reduction which the miners suffered in their wages, and as the miners are the majority of the tenants the new system did not have a proper chance to prove itself.

But even so there is no doubt that more money on a whole was collected from the schemes, but as the rates had to be credited in full, all the deficit is shown against the rent arrears, which naturally have shown a substantial increase.

The Housing Committee have done everything in their power to deal with this increase, a sub-committee spending very much time interviewing tenants in arrears and going thoroughly into each individual case.

The most flagrant cases have had proceedings taken against them, whilst a collector has been appointed to collect arrears of rent from late tenants.

Whilst the abnormal times through which the district is passing is mainly responsible for this state of affairs, many tenants consider their obligations of paying rent as a last consideration, this being borne out by the increases of arrears at holiday times.

Whilst forbidding sub-letting in the four-roomed type of house the Housing Committee, after very careful consideration of the question, decided to allow sub-tenants in the five and six-roomed houses, as it was found that very few tenants could pay the rents asked for these houses, even though the rents compared very favourably with those of the same type owned by other authorities.

In order to encourage the tenants of their houses the Council have decided to hold garden competitions, and it is to be hoped that the occupiers will respond to the efforts of the Council to make the surrounding of their homes much pleasanter places.

J. W. LEE.

SANITARY INSPECTOR'S REPORT, 1928.

The general sanitary work is summarized further on in this report.

HOUSING.

Dwelling houses have been inspected and repaired within the areas of Bedlington, Netherton, Scotland Gate, Choppington Low and High Collieries, Guide Post, Stakeford, Sleekburn and Bank Top. The following observations have been recorded.

Defective Roof tiles and slates.

- „ Flashings.
- „ Eaves spouting together with fall pipes.
- „ Pointing allowing dampness to penetrate walls.
- „ Plaster cracked or falling off in patches.
- „ Floors together with hearths.
- „ Stair heads and risers together with balusters.
- „ Window frames, sashes, cords and fasteners.
- „ Doors and some warped.
- „ Chimney breasts and flues.
- „ Ranges, grates and firebars.

At various properties works of a good nature have been carried out according to the class of building, while at others small collective defects have been remedied and it is these minor repairs when accompanied by others of a varying type which renders the dwelling to become more seriously unfit. The small fault should be looked after at a small cost so as to prevent serious unfitness together with expense. Where repairs have taken place to the roofs of some of the older class dwellings, the perfect procedure and probably the most economical would have been to entirely strip and renew ; at the same time by heightening the walls with a few courses of brick or stonework would have been an advantage.

Although there are many houses which have been repaired or reconditioned still there are cottages existing with one or two rooms each that could be improved. If the owners of such dwellings could be induced to add another room over some of the offshoot pantries, or sculleries, the comfort of many families would be assisted and appreciated, whereas in many cases the overcrowding would rapidly be diminished. Dwelling houses of this description should as soon as possible be a thing of the past especially where people often live and sleep in one common room. Where there is sufficient surrounding air space the building line could be extended without causing any inconvenience from a sanitary point of view. This once done and a little addition to the rent would probably compensate for the extra cost. One must bear in mind diffusion and dissemination is much more rapid without than within, and it is more profitable to sacrifice those little inconveniences without than have those within a dwelling.

Within Front Street, Guide Post, Middle Row, Stakeford, and Brick Row, Bank Top, Section 3 of Housing Acts, 1925, was put into operation and the necessary work completed.

At one dwelling the ground floor rooms were very damp, the walls consisting of stonework and floors concrete. It was practically impossible to insert a D.P.C. A new wood floor has been fixed upon concrete and ventilated, the walls open space stoothed with lath and plaster and ventilated throughout on each side as common brickwork is very attractive to dampness ; the result of the present work has been much admired.

HOUSES ERECTED DURING THE YEAR 1928.

	With State Assistance.	Unaided.	Total.
(a) By Local Authority ...	0	0	0
(b) By other Bodies or Persons	2	2	4
1.—Unfit Dwelling Houses :			
(1) Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)			390
(2) Number of dwelling houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Consolidated) Regulations, 1925			254
(3) Number of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation			
(4) Number of dwelling houses (exclusive of those under (3) above) found not to be "in all respects reasonably fit for habitation"			296
2.—Remedy of Defects without service of formal notices :			
Number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by Local Authority or its officers.			182
3.—Action under Statutory Powers :			
A—Proceedings under Section 3 of Housing Act, 1925 .—			
(1) No. of dwelling houses in respect of which "notices" were served requiring repairs			28
(2) No. of dwelling houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices :—			
(a) By owners			28
(b) By Local Authority in default of owners			—
(3) No. of dwelling houses in respect of which Closing Orders became operative in pursuance of declarations by owners of intention to close			--
B—Proceedings under Public Health Acts :—			
(1) No. of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied			53
(2) No. of dwelling houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices :—			
(a) By owners			22
(b) By Local Authority in default of owners			—
C—Proceedings under Sections 11, 14, and 15 of the Housing Act, 1925 :—			
(1) No. of representations made with a view to the making of Closing Orders			—
(2) No. of dwelling houses in respect of which Closing Orders were made			—
(3) No. of dwelling houses in respect of which Closing Orders were determined—the houses having been rendered fit			—
(4) No. of dwelling houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made			—
(5) No. of dwelling houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders			—
No. of houses permanently discontinued as dwellings and not included in C (2) or (5) above			—

	No. of Inspect'ns during the year.	No. of Defects or Contra-ven- tions of Bye-Laws.	No. outsta'nding from last year.	TOTAL.	No. re- mied after letter or inter- view.	No. of Informal Notices served.	Defects re- mied thereafter	No. of Statutory Notices served.	Defects re- mied thereafter	In progress or being dealt with.
HOUSING.										
Structural Defects	...	410	57	467	369	74	63	2	2	33
Defective Food-store	...	64		64	45	19	19			
Dampness	...	139		139	130	9	9			
Overcrowding	...	3		3	3					
Nuisances	...	162		162	142	20	20			
WATER SUPPLY.										
Insufficient	...									
Unsatisfactory	...									
DRAINAGE.										
Insufficient	...	13		13	13					
Defective	...	79		79	79					
SANITARY CONVENIENCES.										
Insufficient	...	7		7	7					
Defective	...	111		111	111					
Shops, Food-stores, &c.	...	2		2	2					
Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops	...	63	6	69	65					4
Slaughter Houses	...	3		3	3					
Tents, Vans, etc.	...	2		2	2					
Offensive Trades	...	13		13	13					
Workshops and Workplaces	...	5		5	4	1	1			
Keeping of Animals	...	17		17	17					
Insanitary Ashpits and Receptacles	...	11		11	11					
Ashpits improperly used	...	3		3	3					
Offensive Accumulations	...	13		13	13					
Smoke Nuisances	...	1		1	1					1
Petrol Stores	...									
TOTALS	1735	1121	63	1184	1032	123	112	2	2	38

HEALTH VISITORS' REPORT.

The following is a brief summary of our work during the year 1928.

Births registered—600. This includes 21 illegitimate births (11 boys, 10 girls). Births notified to Medical Officer of Health—583. Stillbirths numbered 21.

Seventeen children were transferred to other districts. Thirty-six children came into the shire and 17 of this total were infants born in the Princess Mary Maternity Hospital, the mothers being residents of this district.

Infant deaths registered—44. Twenty-four of these infants died under one month, 15 under one week. The total gives an Infantile Mortality Rate of 73 per 1,000.

Infectious Diseases notified which were visited by us—Scarlet Fever 42, Small-pox 8, Diphtheria 6, Summer Diarrhœa (Notifiable June, July and August) 3, Ophthalmia 2, Puerperal Pyrexia 4, Puerperal Fever 2. Visits to Infectious Cases were as follows:—Scarlet Fever 47, Small-pox contacts 158, Diphtheria 32 (Swabs taken 46), Summer Diarrhœa 10, Ophthalmia with daily treatment 33.

First visits to Infants under one year—554. Total visits to children under one year—1,939. Visits to children 1-5 years—1,188. Ante Natal visits 67, Other visits 61. Combined total of visits—3,535.

Attendances at the Ante Natal Clinic—63. Attendances of Mothers, Infants and Children at the Maternity and Child Welfare Centres—1,893.

In conclusion we wish to say this is the eleventh year we have been so splendidly helped by the Ladies' Working Committees at the various clinics: we are indeed most indebted to them for their faithful and continued services.

Dried Foods given free during the year . . . 4,646 lbs. approx.

Vitamines given free during the year . . . 280

We remain,

Yours obediently,

V. A. N. DAVIES.

G. RISPIN.

Health Visitors.

HOUSING REPAIRS.

Nature	Bedding'n	Netherton	Scotland Gate	Chopping'n	Guide Post	Stakeford	Sleekburn	Total
Roofs Repaired ...	31	17	13	5	33	5	21	125
Walls Repaired ...	3	5	1	0	4	4	0	17
Floors Renewed ...	4	9	3	2	16	1	0	35
Floors Repaired ...	4	1	2	1	13	4	7	32
Windows Renewed	0	8	2	5	11	0	3	29
Windows Repaired	5	0	0	5	0	7	9	26
Spouting Renewed	0	35	5	24	5	6	6	81
Spouting Repaired	5	7	8	5	14	3	0	42
Chimney Stacks Rp.	12	5	2	1	10	1	1	32
Ranges Repaired	6	0	0	4	19	3	11	43
Plastering Renewed	0	0	0	2	5	0	0	7
Plastering Rep. ...	9	0	1	0	0	1	1	12
Foodstores Repaired	5	24	2	3	16	1	13	64
Sculleries Repaired	1	0	0	0	7	0	0	8
General Repairs...	2	0	1	1	11	7	6	28
Outb'dings Rep.	21	3	1	2	4	4	4	39
Yards Paved ...	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Drains Repaired...	4	1	0	1	3	0	2	11
Sanitary Conv' Rep.	33	5	3	21	11	1	18	92
Sanitary Conv' Ren	4	41	0	0	3	5	1	54
Total ...	149	161	45	82	185	53	103	778

SUMMARY OF WORK EFFECTED.

	After Letter or Interview.	After Informal Notice.	TOTAL.
SANITARY CONVENIENCES.			
Privies abolished ...	7		7
„ repaired ...	118	11	129
Privy Ashpits abolished ...	7		7
„ „ roofed or repaired	129	11	140
Pail-closets abolished ...			
Water-closets provided ...	10		10
„ „ repaired ...	57		57
Sanitary bins provided ...	36		36
„ „ renewed ...			
DRAINAGE.			
New drains constructed ...	29		29
Drains repaired or recon- structed ...	3		3
Additional gullies provided	12		12
Old gullies replaced ...	9		9
Scullery sinks provided ...	3		3
„ waste-pipes repaired	30		30
„ „ „ trapped			
Yards repaired or recon- structed ...	11		11

SCAVENGING AND REFUSE DISPOSAL.

The work of cleansing privy middens, ashpits and ashbins is chiefly done by contractors with their carts and horses.

Practically in all the sub-areas the contractors have done their work quite efficiently, and any delay that may have taken place calls for no special comment.

Within the last few years the intervals between the times of scavenging have been gradually reduced from monthly to fortnightly and weekly.

This must have had a marked effect upon large families inhabiting classes of properties of the older type where privies exist. Although the visiting times of the contractor have been increased it has not affected the cost. In fact the cost for the removal of privy contents and house refuse has been gradually decreasing within the last few years to approximately three-fifths of the amount compared with eight years ago per house per annum. Not only have the intervals of visits been reduced, but the number of houses contained in each area considerably lessened, which has brought about quicker, and more efficient scavenging, employing more contractors. It very seldom occurs that a single contractor is given more than one contract. Much of the refuse is used for agricultural purposes, and two disused claypits, one at Choppington and one at Sleekburn, form a tip for the refuse from the nearest surrounding areas. These tips have been frequently disinfected, and waste soils when available deposited as covering material.

The cost of scavenging by contract . . .	£4,147 15 0
Approximate cost per house per annum . . .	14 6

WATER SUPPLY.

The supply is of good quality and is constant. There are no wells or streams providing water for drinking or other purposes, and therefore all risks of pollution or contamination are practically safeguarded.

DRAINAGE.

Frequently nuisances from interrupted drains have been found mostly in the localities of unpaved yards and called for remedy.

After the Conservancy System has become obsolete, and the greater part of the back streets paved, the paving of yards should be considered, especially in cases where several tenants use these areas in common.

SANITARY CONVENIENCES.

Only in isolated cases conversions have taken place; and where this work has been done the full cost has been born by the owner. Constructional defects, to privies and water-closets have occurred

and been remedied as soon as possible. Where defective privies have been found, the owners have been advised to heighten the walls and carry the roofs so as to be suitable for the fixing of all necessary apparatus considering the likelihood of future conversion. The wheeling of ashpit refuse through narrow passages and depositing the same on streets before removal, is being eliminated year by year by the provision of water-closets and bins.

FOOD.

Although improvement in housing conditions, improvement in water supply with regard to quality and maintenance, improvement of sanitary arrangements play an important part with respect to the reduction of sickness or mortality rate, the food must also be an important factor. The control of production, storage and distribution so as to guard against infection, pollution, or contamination cannot be overlooked. The importance of the Regulations with regard to food, Cowsheds, Dairies, and the sale of Meat must gradually become significant.

COWSHEDS AND DAIRIES.

Number of registered producers	47
Number of purveyors who are not producers	14

During the year regular inspections have been made, and attention has been paid to cleanliness of cattle buildings, and utensils; instructions to cowkeepers; and notices posted within sheds. Milk when considered as pure should be produced from animals free from disease, and delivered to the consumer without pollution or contamination. Up to the present time no producer within the district has taken advantage of any of the Grades contained in the "Special Designation Order," 1923. However, several Collective Samples have been taken and subjected to the Biological Test, and the results are contained in this report.

Although the requirements of the Milk and Dairies Order, 1926, are various, and varied times are permitted for carrying out the necessary provisions, a commencement was made forthwith in 1926, and the works carried out are furthered in this report.

Interviews were arranged with the Registered Occupiers pointing out what was necessary to meet the Order.

Having regard that the occupier is really the responsible person under the Act, letters and notices in duplicate were at once sent to each registered person, one for himself and one for the owner. Through this much of the work has been put in hand and completed.

Many of the producers have met their obligations in agreement with the owner where the work necessitated a considerable expense. In some cases the Dairies could be improved by the addition of a small portable sterilizing plant. The results of sterilizing utensils by steam cannot be over-estimated, as the diminishing of

bacteria or bacilli not only improves the purity of the milk, but the keeping qualities are extended. The cooling of milk should not on any account be overlooked.

However, in the most of cases the first sources of contamination are gradually being dealt with, that is, the cowsheds, and no dairy can thoroughly undo what has been done in a shed.

Lately much talk has been conveyed that it is not necessary to have "Elaborate Buildings" for the production of pure milk.

It is well known that it is not necessary to have bricks, stone, or woodwork of any architectural nature or ornamentation; but in my opinion all internal portions of a shed or dairy should be hygenically finished so as to be easily kept clean. It is necessary a perfect system of drainage, light and ventilation should be maintained for carrying off all effluvia in the quickest of time. The cow also needs the very best of environment for establishing a healthy herd.

IMPROVEMENTS TO COWSHEDS AND DAIRIES

(Year 1926)

- (1) Netherton Farm. New cowshed of stone and brickwork provided for eight cows together with new dairy. Automatic drinking fountain fixed at the head of each cow with about twenty yards of service pipes. The flooring concreted, channelled and drained. A new drainage system composed of 4 inch sanitary pipes with inspection chamber draining to liquid tank approximately two hundred feet away from shed. Previous shed insufficient floor space.
- (2) Mount Pleasant Farm. Cowshed erected in brickwork for fourteen cows. Automatic water fountains with necessary fittings fixed at head of each cow, and about sixty yards of service pipe laid. The flooring concreted, channelled, and drained. Necessary ventilation and lighting provided. The dairy improved internally. A new drainage system introduced.

Previous sheds, bad flooring, light, ventilation, and insufficient floor space.
- (3) East Sleekburn Farm. Dairy improved and disconnected from rooms of dwelling.
- (4) Cambois Farm. Three sheds inhabiting thirty-eight cows; the whole of the flooring re-concreted, channelled, and new drainage system provided. At these sheds the floors did not permit of effectual drainage, the gradient having been interfered with through subsidence. The drains when opened out and exposed, an open brickwork and stonework culvert saturated with filth, and in some parts several areas of sewage effected soil was seen in patches. This drainage system was responsible for draining the whole of the farm buildings fitted with sanitary gullies. About eighty yards of new four inch sanitary drains

have been laid, and all connections brought in with the scheme. A new dairy and cleansing room with necessary apparatus provided without the dwelling.

- (5) Red Row Farm. Ten automatic water fountains with necessary fittings fixed.
- (6) East End, Bedlington. Two small cowsheds for seven animals provided each with new dairy without dwellings.
- (7) North Farm, Choppington. Sheds for thirty cows; automatic water fountains placed at the head of each animal.
- (8) Stakeford Farm. New brickwork cowshed erected for eight cows, substituting one unsatisfactory wood shed. The flooring concreted throughout, channelled and drained.
- (9) Cleasewell Hill Farm. New brickwork cowshed erected for eight cows, with concrete floor and necessary drainage substituting shed with insufficient floor space.

(Year 1927)

- (10) Blue House Farm. Twenty yards 6 inch sanitary drain, with gullies fixed substituting field pipes.
- (11) Cambois Farm. Automatic water fountains fixed in three sheds serving thirty-six cows with necessary services and fittings, together with three water bib cocks, and waste prevented. Artificial light by electricity.
- (12) Broadway House Farm. The roof of cowshed for eight cows stripped and renewed, lighting improved. The dairy improved and disconnected from dwelling.
- (13) Whimey Hill Farm. Shed for six cows; automatic water fountain with service for each animal fixed.
- (14) East Farm, Choppington. Cowshed for eight cows; flagged floor and channel taken up, substituted by concrete together with drainage. The roof, stalls, and lighting improved. A new dairy provided with hot and cold water services.
- (15) North Farm, Choppington. Sheds for thirty cows; lighting improved.
- (16) West End Farm. Cowshed for eight cows; internal walls cement rendered.
- (17) Red Row Farm. Two cowsheds, sixteen cows, part main walls renewed, roofs repaired at one shed, lighting improved, floor concreted, water supply brought within shed, water fountains and services introduced at the head of each animal, approximately one hundred and ten yards of sanitary pipes laid with necessary gullies, and chamber improved. Privy substituted by water-closet.
- (18) East End, Bedlington. Three cows; automatic fountain placed at head of each animal.

- (19) West Sleekburn Farm. Automatic fountain introduced with services and fittings for thirty-six cows.
- (20) Bomarsund Farm. Sixteen automatic fountains with necessary services and fittings introduced in shed. New dairy with water supply erected without dwelling.
- (21) Brocklane Farm. New dairy erected with water supply without the dwelling.

(Year 1928)

- (22) Hartford Road Farm. Shed for twelve cows; existing concrete floor and channelling has been improved, new stalls fixed, the internal rubble walls built up to roof throughout and cement rendered to four feet six inches from floor, one side wall repaired, twelve new overhead ventilators inserted directing the air upwards from the body of the cows. Approximately sixty yards of new water services laid and brought within shed, having necessary fittings and bib taps. About twenty-eight square yards of concrete laid for approaches; and the drainage system improved with about twenty yards of sanitary pipes and trapped gullies. A new dairy has been erected without the dwelling, having the floor of concrete, channelled and drained, the internal walls faced with cement throughout. A cleansing room has been erected separate from dairy and provided with hot and cold water together with necessary fittings. The approaches to dairy has been laid with concrete.
- (23) Ridge Farm. Shed for nine cows; the internal arrangements all stripped on account of confined standage, the cows being tethered flank to flank. The whole of the flooring has been reconcreted, channelled and drained. The lighting and ventilation has been improved in walls and roof. The internal rubble walls have been repaired, partly faced in cement and carried to roof trusses. About forty-five yards of sanitary pipes have been laid to sewer and gullies fixed, and an old collecting chamber done away with. A new concrete feeding system has been adopted, and all partitions for stalls renewed and rearranged, providing an admirable space at the back of the cows. New entrance doors fixed. The water supply has been brought within the shed.
- (24) Meadow Dale. The whole of the cowshed for six cows has been stripped internally, one side entrance of rubble wall built up, the internal wall surfaces rendered with cement throughout from floor to roof. The flagged flooring has been taken up and substituted by concrete, channelled and drained. The external drainage has been improved. The stalls rearranged and renewed. New feeding troughs have been fixed, and approximately ninety square yards of concrete approach laid. A new brickwork dairy has been erected with concrete floor, and faced throughout.

- (25) Barrington Farm. The flagged flooring has been taken up within shed for ten cows and substituted by concrete, channelled and drained. The lighting and ventilation improved. Part of internal walls cement rendered, new partitions for stalls, together with new concrete feeding troughs fixed. Automatic drinking fountains, together with necessary fittings, established for all animals.
- (26) Small Holdings, West Sleekburn. At three Holdings part of the accommodation for thirteen cows in all consisted of wood sheds. These buildings, although fairly fit and well kept, were considered unsuitable for the production of clean milk. Instead of clearing out the animals the owners were approached to assist these occupiers, and it was clearly pointed out the necessity of an increased milk supply. After several interviews and communications it was eventually decided that extra buildings should be provided of a suitable type. In each case brickwork buildings have been provided consisting of concrete flooring, channelled and drained, with provision of light and ventilation. New concrete feeding troughs have been fixed, new fodder houses built, and permanent artificial light established.
- (27) Hust Head. Shed for ten cows; the flagged floor taken up, substituted by concrete, channelled and drained. The partitions for stalls renewed, internal rubble walls rendered in cement, lighting and ventilation, improved together with permanent artificial light. Automatic fountains with fittings fixed for each cow, together with a concrete approach. The entrance to dairy has been brought without the dwelling.
- (28) North Farm, Choppington. Shed for ten cows; a new concrete floor laid.
- (29) South Farm, Choppington. Shed for twelve cows; stripped internally, stalls rearranged and partitions renewed, flooring concreted throughout and provided with channels and drained. The lighting and ventilation improved. The stone rubble walls repaired and surfaced, new feeding troughs have been fixed, water supply brought within shed, new entrance doors fixed.
- (30) Windmill Farm. Approximately one hundred yards of new drains laid.
- (31) Church Lane Farm. Lighting improved.
- (32) Jordan's Holding. Lighting improved.

Since year 1906 approximately £3.050 has been estimated as cost on improvement works.

MILK SAMPLES, 1928.

BIOLOGICAL TEST FOR TUBERCULAR BACILLI.

Designation.	No of Cows.	Results.
A	22	Negative.
B	13	do
C	13	Positive—1 cow slaughtered--Indurated under udder
D	11	Negative.
E	16	do.
F	5	do.
G	6	do
H	7	do. Indurated udder previous
I	3	do.
J	10	do.
K	10	do.
L	10	do.
M	9	do.
N	7	do.
O	6	Positive (1 Isolated).
P	1	Negative.
Q	11	do
R	5	do.
S	8	do.
T	5	do

178

SLAUGHTER HOUSES.

Number of registered premises 17

Number of licenced premises 1

These premises have been regularly inspected during the year, and each have been kept in a clean condition. An endeavour has been made to inspect the majority of the animals after slaughter.

The class of carcasses have been of good quality, no cow beef, over aged mutton or pork has come under my observation.

Upon other premises four cases of emergency slaughter have taken place. Notices were duly given, and carcasses examined and passed fit. These carcasses consisting of beef, were remarketed, and confirmed for food consumption.

Beef surrendered 86 stones. Organs . . 18

Mutton surrendered 13 stones. Organs . . 13

Pork surrendered 3 stones. Organs . . 3

The chief diseases consisted of tuberculosis, inflammation, distomatosis, flukes, decomposition, and one case of *Strongylus Rugeiensis* (Husk or Hoose). In the case of latter I had reason to condemn carcase on account of the suffocated appearance of the flesh, and the owner of the carcase was compensated by the farmer. Over sixty cottagers' pigs have been inspected and only in one case any sign of disease has been present.

FACTORIES, WORKSHOPS AND WORKPLACES.

Premises.	Inspections.	Written Notices.
Factories (including Factory Laundries) ..	41	3
Workshops (including Workshop Laundries) ..	23	0
Workplaces (other than outworkers' premises) ..	34	0
Totals ..	98	3

NUISANCES UNDER THE PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS.

Other Nuisances	No. Found—2	No. Remedied—2.
Sanitary Accommodation (unsuitable or defective)	do. 1	do. 1
Totals	3	3

INFECTIOUS DISEASE PREVENTION.

Dwellings are regularly disinfected or fumigated after disease of an infectious character.

All the schools within the district have been fumigated twice during the year.

Number of schools disinfected	34
Number of dwellings disinfected	199

COMMON LODGING HOUSES.

Two exist and are frequently visited. Very few lodgers appear to inhabit the same.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.

These chiefly consist of Bakeries, Motor and Cycle Works, Mineral Water Works, Carpentry, Furniture Works, Boot and Shoe Makers, Tailors, Clock and Watch Repairers, Dressmakers, Milliners, and Hosiery.

OFFENSIVE TRADES.

Chiefly consist of Fish and Chip Shops, and regular visits have been made.

R. M. LAVERICK,
Sanitary Inspector.

Causes of, and Ages at Death during the year 1928.

CAUSE OF DEATH.		Nett Deaths at the subjoined ages of "Residents" whether occurring within or without the District.												
		Total.	Under 1 year.	1 & under 2 years.	2 & under 3 years.	3 & under 4 years.	4 & under 5 years.	5 & under 10 years.	10 & under 15 years.	15 & under 20 years.	20 & under 35 years.	35 & under 45 years.	45 & under 65 years.	65 years & over.
1 Enteric Fever ...	...												
2 Small Pox ...	...												
3 Measles ...	...	1		1										
4 Scarlet Fever ...	...												
5 Whooping Cough ...	...	1				1								
6 Diphtheria ...	...	2		1						1				
7 Influenza ...	...	2										1		1
8 Encephalitis Lethargica ...	...												
9 Meningococcal Meningitis ...	...	2			1						1			
10 Tuberculosis of Respiratory System ...	...	14							1	1	5	3	4	
11 Other Tuberculous Diseases ...	...	10	1	1		1		1	2	2		1	1	
12 Cancer, Malignant Disease ...	...	28				1						4	13	10
13 Rheumatic Fever ...	...												
14 Diabetes ...	...	4								1			2	1
15 Cerebral Hemorrhage, etc. ...	...	15						1					6	8
16 Heart Disease ...	...	56									4	1	19	32
17 Arterio Sclerosis ...	...	33									1		7	25
18 Bronchitis ...	...	20	9	1							1	1		8
19 Pneumonia (all forms) ...	...	34	7	5	4	3		2	1		1	2	5	5
20 Other Respiratory Diseases ...	...	3											3	
21 Ulcer of Stomach—Duodenum ...	...	3									1	2		
22 Diarrhœa, etc. (under 2 yrs.) ...	...	1		1										
23 Appendicitis & Syphilitis ...	...	2						1	1					
24 Cirrhosis of Liver ...	...												
25 Acute Chronic Nephritis ...	...	12									3	1	5	3
26 Puerperal Sepsis ...	...												
27 Other accidents & diseases of Pregnancy & Parturition ...	...	2	1								1			
28 Congenital Debility & Mal- formation, Premature Birth ...	...	23	21		1		1							
29 Suicide ...	...	2									2			
30 Other Deaths from Violence ...	...	17			1	1		2	1	2	3	2	4	1
31 Other Defined Diseases ...	...	42	3	1	2				2	2	2	2	3	25
32 Causes ill-defined or unknown ...	...	4	3				1							
TOTALS ...	...	333	45	11	9	7	2	7	8	9	24	20	72	119

During the year 15 uncertified deaths were registered.

